

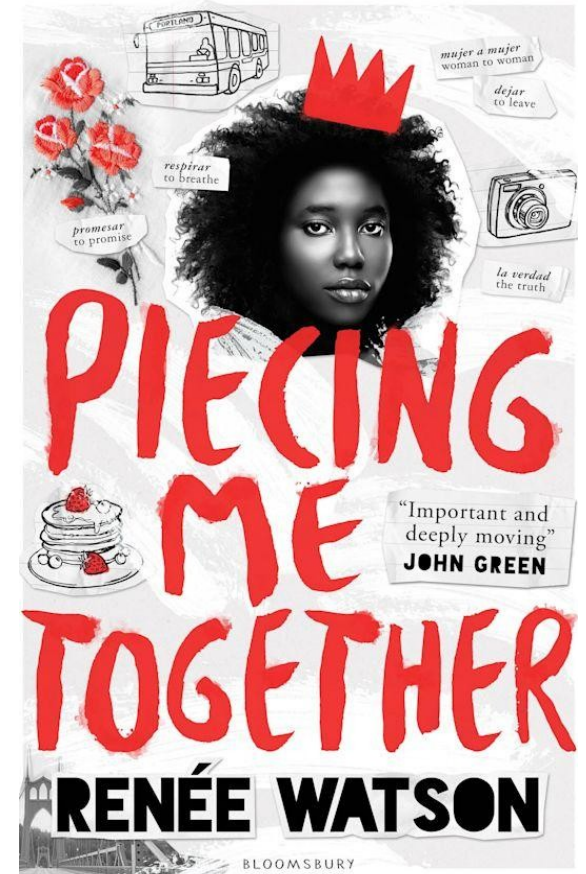
Name_____ Class_____

Piecing Me Together by Renee Watson, a Novel Study

I am learning to speak. To give myself a way out. A way in.

Jade believes she must get out of her poor neighborhood if she's ever going to succeed. Her mother tells her to take advantage of every opportunity that comes her way. And Jade has: every day she rides the bus away from her friends and to the private school where she feels like an outsider, but where she has plenty of opportunities. But some *opportunities* she doesn't really welcome, like an invitation to join Women to Women, a mentorship program for "at-risk" girls. Just because her mentor shares some aspects of Jade's identity and graduated from the same high school doesn't mean she understands where Jade is coming from. She's tired of being singled out as someone who needs help, someone people want to fix. Jade wants to speak, to create, to express her joys and sorrows, her pain and her hope. Maybe there are some things she could show other women about understanding the world and finding ways to be real, to make a difference.

Be bold. Be brave. Be beautiful. Be brilliant. Be (your) best.



Literary Devices and Elements in the Novel (What to look out for while reading)

***Point of View (Narrator):** 1st or 3rd Person

***Point of View (Perspective):** How a character views the world/situations around them

***Conflict(s):** Internal (character vs. self) External (character vs. character, character vs. society, character vs. self)

***Character Traits:** words/adjectives that describe character's personality or qualities that make them who they are

***Character Types:** The Protagonist/ The Antagonist/The Confidant/ Flat/Round/Static/Dynamic

***Character Motivation:** The REASON behind a character's behaviors and actions in a given scene or throughout a story

***Character Development:** The changes a character undergoes over the course of a story as a result of their actions and experiences.

***Figurative Language:** Figures of speech such as metaphors, similes, and allusions go beyond the literal meanings of the words to give readers new insights.

Imagery- A strong mental picture created with words often associated with our 5 senses

Analogy- A comparison, something that shows how two things are alike, but with the ultimate goal of making a point /helping the reader to understand something

Allusion- A reference to a well-known story, person, place, thing, or idea

Idiom- an expression or figure of speech, Example: It's raining cats and dogs means it's raining heavily

Internal Monologue- (Inner thinking) narrative technique that exhibits the thoughts passing through the minds of the protagonists.

***Plot-** The storyline of a text

***Suspense:** The tension that keeps our attention between one moment and another, “what will happen next”?

***Themes:** A lesson or message or a central, unifying idea

Thought Question: The novel is told in the 1st person perspective of Jade (the protagonist). What might be a *benefit* of the story being told in the 1st person?

Chapters 1-4 (pp. 1-20): Character Traits/ Motivation “Words to Know”- Irony, *Italics*, Mentor, Collage

Writing Task- At this point in the story, we are just getting to know Jade, please list two-character traits (words/adjectives that describe character's personality or qualities that make them who they are)

***Use pgs. 10 and 13 for help if needed....**

Character Trait #1: _____

Evidence: _____

Character Trait #2: _____

Evidence: _____

Q. At this point in the story, what seems to be the MAJOR *motivation* behind Jades actions?

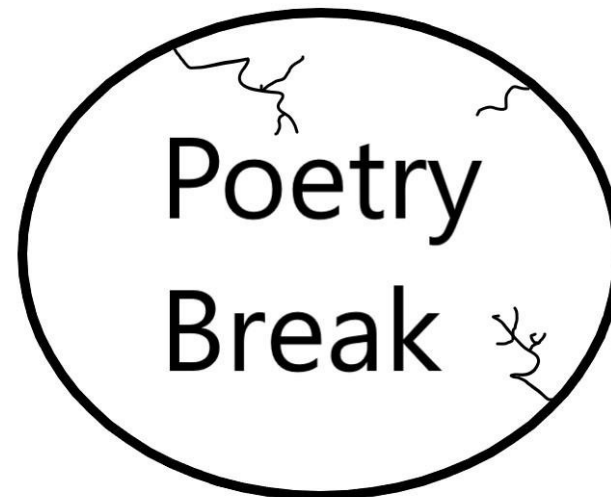
***An Allusion is a reference to a well-known story, person, place, thing, or idea**
On Pg. 11 Jade states, “How am I someone’s answered prayer but also someone’s *deferred dream*?”

Harlem by Langston Hughes

What happens to a dream deferred?

Does it dry up
like a raisin in the sun?
Or fester like a sore—
And then run?
Does it stink like rotten meat?
Or crust and sugar over—
like a syrupy sweet?

Maybe it just sags
like a heavy load.



Or does it explode?

Q. What is the significance or meaning of the allusion to the poem *Harlem*, and the words “deferred dream” on pg. 11? Think about Jade’s point of view and relationship with her parents for help...

Figurative Language Organizer

Figurative Language	Type of Figurative language (Circle One or More)	Meaning or connotation (feeling or emotion behind the words)
pg.8 “... I know all about Mom’s promises. She does her best to make them, but they are fragile and easy to break”	Simile Metaphor Personification Imagery Analogy Idiom Symbolism Something else? _____	
pg.9 “I ride the 35 through the maze of houses that all	Simile Metaphor Personification	

look like one another, like sisters who are not twins but everyone thinks they are.”	Imagery Analogy Idiom Symbolism Something else? _____	
pg.19 “This is a good <i>opportunity</i> for you” The word shadows me. Follows me like a stray cat.”	Simile Metaphor Personification Imagery Analogy Idiom Symbolism Something else? _____	

Chapters 5-10 (pp. 21-46): Literary Conflict “Words to Know”- Adage/parable, cliché

Informational Article Break- YORK: THE AMERICAN HERO,
<https://history.denverlibrary.org/news/york-american-hero>

Thought Question- On pg.s 23-24, a description of Sacagawea and York’s influence was given about how their contributions and actions had an effect on “The New World”, Jade reflects on their lives and thinks, “*I am thinking about Sacagawea and York, wondering how they must have felt having a form of freedom but no real power.*”

Q. How might the above quote relate to the feelings that Jade is having about her place in the world and in her school?

Please read the following Adages/ Parables on pg. 33 *Parable definition: a simple or well-known story used to illustrate a moral truth or spiritual lesson

“You can give a man a fish and feed him for a day. You can teach a man to fish and feed him for a lifetime”

“Help her to understand why the river is so polluted so that she and her friends can organize to get the river clean and make it possible for the entire community to eat there too,”

Q. How might these parables relate to the idea of mentoring?

Q. At this point in the story what type or types of conflicts is Jade facing? - Please use evidence/explain

Internal (character vs. self)/ External (character vs. character, character vs. society, character vs. self)

Q. What seems to be the MAIN conflict Jade is facing so far? Please explain Internal (character vs. self)/ External (character vs. character, character vs. society, character vs. self)

Chapters 11-14 (pp. 47-68):

Words to Know-

Sympathy: Feelings of sorrow for someone else's misfortune. *Latin sympathia*
"community of feeling"****Feeling FOR someone...***

Empathy: The ability to understand and share the feelings of another.
German *Einfühlung* (from *ein* "in" + *Fühlung* "feeling" ****Feeling as or the same as someone...***

Thought Question: (Pgs. 57-58) At the end of Chapter 12, Sam apologizes to Jade for not making sense after telling her a story about how she feels bad for her brother, Jade quickly responds, “Yes, you are...”

Do you believe that Jade is *sympathizing* or *empathizing* with Sam? Please Explain...

Thought Question:

(Pgs. 62-63) Towards the end of chapter 13, Jade shows Maxine her scrap box that she uses for creating her collages. How does this scrap box relate or connect to the title of the story, “Piecing Me Together? Please Explain...

Chapters 15-23 (pp. 69-91):

Words to know- Conjure, Commodity, Inspiration, Duality, Optimist, Pessimist

Thought Question: In pages 84-86, Jade battles with the duality of dreaming and some harsh realities. In the end do you believe that Jade is more optimistic or pessimistic? Please Explain...

Chapters 24-27 (pp. 92-107):

***Literal Language:** Words and phrases that reflect the dictionary definitions of words and mean exactly what they say... **Example: It was a windy night**

***Figurative Language:** Artistic language, Figures of speech such as metaphors, similes, personification, allusions and more that go beyond the literal meanings of the words to give readers new insights. **Example: The trees danced in the moonlight**

Thought Question:

Please read and analyze the following passage from Pg. 107, “We all end up laughing, and the night ends with card games and Scrabble, and I go to bed, full in so many, many ways.”

-Be sure to re-read pgs. 106 and 107 before

What does Jade mean by feeling “full” on a literal level?

What does Jade mean by feeling “full” on a figurative level?

Chapters 28-30 (pp. 108-122):

Words/Phrases To Know-

Realist- a person who accepts a situation as it is and is prepared to deal with it accordingly (not optimistic or pessimistic)

Pity- feeling sorrow for the misfortunes of others

Solemn- being serious and dignified in appearance or behavior formal, sad

***Character motivation**

Thought Question: Please read and analyze the following passage from Pg.

114, “What makes you do this?” Well, I guess I’m doing this because, well, because I want to make a difference and because I-” I roll my eyes. “The real reason”, I tell her . “Is it good money” Did you always want a little sister? There has to be a reason.” Maxine laughs. “Okay, here it is- the money does help, of course. And, um let’s see, well, I’m really interested in working with young girls and women...so I thought this would be a good experience for me, ...”

Q. At this point in the novel, what do you believe Maxine’s main *motivation* for mentoring Jade is? Please explain...

Chapters 31-36 (pp. 123-142):

Words/Phrases to know-

Resolution- A firm decision to do or not to do something

Alliteration- The repetition of the same letter or sound at the beginning of closely connected words

Expedition- A journey or voyage undertaken by a group of people with a particular purpose

Perpendicular- Lines that meet another if they meet or cross at right angles (90°)

***Rhetorical Question- A question asked in order to create a dramatic effect or to make a point rather than to get an answer**

Thought Question: On Pg. 130, Jade questions whether she should trust Maxine, “She knows I want out and she has come with a lifeboat. Except I just don’t know if I can trust her hand.”

At this point in the novel, do YOU believe that Maxine is trustworthy? (Please Explain)

Chapters 37-41 (pp. 143-166):

Word/Phrases to Know: *Analogy *Suspense

Stereotype- a stereotype is a fixed, over-generalized belief about a particular of people

Thought Question: How does the author build *suspense* at the end of chapter 41 (pgs. 165-166) ?

Please use RACE (Restate/Answer/ "Cite"/Explain

[illegible]

Chapters 42- 48 (pp. 167-188):

Word/Phrases to Know: *Idiom

Insubordinate- Not obeying authority refusing to follow orders

Thought Questions:

What do you believe the idiom “burning bridges” means on pg. 168? Please explain...

On page 180, Maxine and Jade make a promise to each other, “How about we make a deal? I quit Jon; you don’t quit the program.” “Deal.”

Make a prediction, do you believe that Maxine and Jade will keep their promises to each other? Please explain...

Chapters 49-56 (pp. 189-211):

Word/Phrases to Know:

***Repetition in Literature-** Intentionally using a word or phrase for effect, two or more times in a written work. For repetition to be noticeable, the words or phrases should be repeated within close proximity of each other. Repeating the same words or phrases in a literary work can bring clarity to an idea and/or make it memorable for the reader or help support a central idea or theme.

Candid- truthful and straightforward; in photography, a picture taken without a persons knowledge

Throughout the novel, the idea of using your voice and speaking up for yourself continues to come up. Several people in Jades life have been advising her on the importance of using her own voice to speak out about what she believes in. In chapter 56, Jade is still having a hard time using her voice to express herself but uses her voice in a different way.

How does Jade use her voice without speaking in Chapter 56? How might this outlet of her feelings be both positive and negative or limiting? Please explain...

Bonus Q. Why might Jade prefer to take candid pictures rather than posed ones?

A) They reveal more of the truth **B)** They are more artistic **C)** They are easier to cut up for a collage

Chapters 57- 63 (pp. 212-232):

Word/Phrases to Know: Plot elements/Climax or turning Point

Climax is the highest point of tension or drama in a narratives' plot. Often, climax is also when the main problem of the story is faced and solved by the main character or protagonist. The phrase climax is derived from the Greek word klimax meaning "ladder." Reading a story is like climbing a ladder, with the climax at the top.

Writing Task: Please identify and explain the climax or turning point in chapter 62

Bonus Q. What is the importance of the quote, “I can speak for myself” on pg. 229?

- A)** Jade no longer needs a mentor **B)** Jade has forgiven Maxine
C) Jade is no longer in conflict with her mother **D)** Jade has a clear vision of her future

Chapters 64- 76 (pp. 232-261):

Words and Phrases to Know-

Freedom: the power or right to act, speak, or think as one wants without restraint. Etymology: Old English *freo* "exempt from; not in bondage, acting of one's own will," also "noble; joyful," from Proto-Germanic **friez* "beloved; not in bondage"

***Theme**

Thought Question: On Pg. 246, Jade, describes how York had asked for his freedom and what it would mean to him. “All York wanted was to be close to his wife, who lived in Kentucky. All York wanted was to hold on to that feeling, that feeling when you stand at the ocean, letting the water rush up to your feet and run away again. The feeling of looking out and not being able to see a end or beginning. That feeling that reminds you how massive the world is, how tiny but powerful humans are.”

Freedom can be described as both a state of being and a feeling, what does “freedom” mean to you? Please answer, explain with an example...

***Themes: A lesson or message or a central, unifying idea**
Possible Theme of “Piecing Me Together” Perseverance, Individuality, Finding ones Identity/voice

Q. What is a possible theme of “Piecing Me Together” and how does it connect to the the last chapter in the book?

Project 1: Create a collage about a yourself or someone who has impacted you in some way (could be a character in a book, family member, friend, someone who had inspired you, someone in the media, etc...)

Project 2: Write an essay comparing how in 1955 the civil rights movement used Jet Magazine to get attention with the photo of Emmitt Till and how it connects to how social media is used by activists today

Informational Articles-

**-Mentors play critical role in quality of college experience, new poll suggests
Common Lit, by Leo M. Lambert, Jason Husser, and Peter Felten**

-<https://www.commonlit.org/en/texts/the-harlem-renaissance>

-YORK: THE AMERICAN HERO, <https://history.denverlibrary.org/news/york-american-hero>